

In re Patent Application of:

BRANCH ET AL.

Serial No. 10/015,024

Filed: DECEMBER 11, 2001

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 21 are currently pending. Claims 1, 12, and 17 to 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 to 6, 10 and 12 to 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of United States Patent No. 6,325,552 (Brillhart) in combination with United States Patent No. 6,213,806 (Choy) alone or in further view of United States Patent No. 5,879,173 (Poplawski et al). The drawings and the description have been objected to for being incomplete and poorly referenced. Claims 7 to 9, 11 and 17 to 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 20 and 21 are allowed.

The claims of the application have been amended to overcome the objections of the Examiner and to better define the invention in light of the prior art. In particular, claims 1 and 12 have been amended to correctly introduce the element "a cooperating structure". Claim 12 has also been amended to provide an antecedent for "said coupling elements". Claim 12 have also been amended to more clearly define that the "cooperating structure" is on the carrier or the cover, whichever one does not include the "coupling mechanism".

With reference to the substantial objections, the elements of claims 6 and 7 have been added to claim 2, and the elements of claims 6 and 17 have been added to claim 13, as suggested by the Examiner. Moreover, the elements of claims 6 and 8 have been added to claim 1, with the slots included in

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the cover and the coupling elements in the carrier, as suggested at the end of paragraph 0025. Furthermore, the elements of claims 6 and 7 have been added to claim 12 to ensure all aspects of the invention are protected.

Extensive amendments have been made to the detailed description and to the Figures to provide better continuity therebetween. Additional reference to the Figures has been added to the description along with additional reference numerals. Additional reference numerals have been added to the description to ensure all of the reference numerals are in all of the Figures.

The title of the application has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's request to eliminate reference to the word "improved".

As such, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims remaining in the application are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable consideration would be appreciated.

Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including Extension of Time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1465 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: M/S AMENDMENT, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, PO BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450, on this 3 day of March, 2005.



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IN THE DRAWINGS:

Attached are new Figures 1 to 5 as explained in the accompanying remarks section.